

Apple 'preparing' to launch smaller tablet

July 5 2012



A mother and daughter play with an Apple iPad at an Apple store in Shanghai on July 2. Apple is preparing to launch a smaller tablet computer in the coming months in a bid to maintain its edge in an increasingly crowded market, the Wall Street Journal reported Thursday.

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The Journal cited unnamed sources as saying that component parts

manufacturers had been ordered to gear up for mass production of the tablets in September, indicating the launch may be drawing near.

It said the new tablet's screen would likely be smaller than eight inches (20 centimeters), compared to the 9.7-inch (25-centimeter) screen on Apple's market-leading iPad, launched in 2010.

The newspaper cited one source as saying that Apple was working with screen-makers LG Display of South Korea and Taiwan's [AU Optronics](#).

Apple has dominated the market for tablet computers since the release of the [iPad](#) but faces increasing competition as Samsung, Amazon, Microsoft and Google roll out competing devices.

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Citation: Apple 'preparing' to launch smaller tablet (2012, July 5) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-07-apple-smaller-tablet.html>

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